

March 27, 1981

LB 535, 233, 245, 253, 278

CLERK: Mr. President, if I may right before that, Senator Lamb would like to print amendments to LB 245; Senator DeCamp to LB 253; Revenue reports LB 233 to General File with amendments and LB 278 to General File with amendments, (Signed) Senator Carsten, Chair. (See pages 1162-1163 of the Legislative Journal.)

Mr. President, LB 535 was offered by Senator Warner. (Read.) The bill was first read on January 29, referred to Constitutional Revision Committee. The bill was advanced to General File.

PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes Senator Warner.

SENATOR WARNER: Mr. President, let me first tell you what LB 535 does not do. LB 535 does not put the issue of biennial sessions on the ballot. As a matter of fact, it has no reference to biennial sessions. What it does do is two other things. It would permit the Legislature during the odd session, adopt a biennial budget, which then could be amended, altered just as we would do a bill now in the even number years. Budgets are already submitted on a biennial basis. They have been that way forever and there is no change there. The provisions of the Constitution would permit us to do that portion if we wanted to now but I think it would, personally I support on a program basis, biennial budget so that you give an agency clear instructions as to a policy matter decided by the Legislature, those programs that should be expanded over the two year or reduced in its scope over a two year period. You still make annual adjustments for inflation or whatever other factors you want to affecting salaries so it makes no change there. It would require 33 votes to do the second year funding just as it requires 33 votes now for every budget bill so there is no impact there. The purpose is solely one, in my opinion, to permit the Legislature for a longer period of time to indicate to an agency the programs that they want to expand or the programs we want to reduce. That brings greater efficiency and orderliness. The second part of the amendment permits an A bill or funding for a new program to be extended as far out as four years and I would suggest that if you adopt that portion that you will go a long ways, in fact, you will eliminate the problem we have had since we went to annual sessions in that if you want to pass legislation that has incremental increases in funding, this would allow you to enact and authorize expenditure for up to a four year period with the incremental increase such as we have had in a number of areas would be spelled out into the budget, into the appropriations. It would then be automatically be considered by the Board of Equalization for setting rates. If you remember the problem we have had with